



The Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) annually compiles a report of their activities and accomplishments during the fiscal year. Hidden in these pages of facts, figures and technical jargon are the highlights and successes of each OFM department and region.

In the past months, OFM's programs and customer services have developed and expanded, filling an Annual Report of many pages. However, here is an overview of those accomplishments, a sampling so to speak, of the work of the Office of Foreign Missions and of its effect on you.

For more than 20 years, OFM has provided the foundation to facilitate secure and efficient operations of U.S. missions abroad, and of foreign missions and international organizations in the United States. It uses such strategies as negotiation, reciprocity, partnerships and continuing outreach efforts to better serve and protect both its own American citizens, here and out of country, and members of the foreign diplomatic and consular

community assigned to the U.S. Its services to that community include all matters relating to motor vehicles, tax, customs, property, travel and, most importantly, safety and security.

Now OFM continues to take advantage of new opportunities as it aggressively incorporates technology into its daily tasks. The newest example of this is the OFM Web page at <http://www.state.gov/ofm>. You'll want to mark this site as your homepage.

OFM leadership demonstrates the Office's integration in the Department of State. The Office is headed by Assistant Secretary of State for Diplomatic Security and OFM Director Francis X. Taylor; and Deputy Assistant Secretary and OFM Deputy Director Lynwood M. Dent. The two energize OFM's motivated and committed staff.

In a continually changing world, OFM utilizes mission, vision, technology and strategy to meet the challenges as it fulfills its mandate to serve. □



OFM's new address on the Web is <http://www.state.gov/ofm>.

Program Highlights

OFM's programs cover five major areas: Property, Travel, Motor Vehicles, Tax and Customs. They reflect many of the same qualities that enhance the best workplaces, whether public or private, large or small: customer focus, quality management, innovation, efficient use of resources, a multi-mission character, and, a dedicated workforce.

Diplomatic Motor Vehicles (DMV) Program.

Through the DMV program, OFM issues driver licenses and titles, and registers all diplomatic and consular vehicles in the U.S.; ensures liability insurance coverage; enforces parking fines; and removes irresponsible drivers from the roads through close contact with law enforcement and judicial agencies nationwide.

By applying the principle of reciprocity, OFM assures that the treatment accorded U.S. Missions and their personnel by for-

eign governments is reciprocated to the foreign diplomatic community in the United States specific to motor vehicles. OFM has collaborated with our missions overseas on government-to-government negotiations and reciprocity agreements to achieve more favorable treatment and cost savings for vehicle services.

A recent situation at one of our U.S. embassies underscores the merit of OFM employing the principle of reciprocity.

A host country routinely issued diplomatic license plates only for autos of the U.S. mission. However, counter to long-standing diplomatic practices in other countries, the country in question would not issue diplomatic plates for the U.S. mission's trucks and buses. Over two years, and to no avail, the U.S. embassy cited practical, traditional and security-related practices in an effort to effect a policy change. Meanwhile, OFM did not discriminate between vehicles types for that country's foreign embassy in Washington. It continued to issue diplomatic plates for both the embassy's automobiles and trucks.

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Tax and Customs



The happy mother and child pictured are A&T staff dependents at the U. S. embassy in Slovenia using their newly negotiated ability to buy tax-free goods. A joint negotiation by Embassy Ljubljana and OFM with the government of Slovenia resulted in tax relief for both sides.

OFM's Office of Diplomatic Tax and Customs section oversees two programs of vital interest to the U.S. and to the foreign nationals it hosts—the *Diplomatic Tax Exemption Program* and the *Diplomatic Customs Program*. Not all foreign missions and their personnel are entitled to all privileges. Privileges are based reciprocally on those afforded U.S. missions abroad.

Diplomatic Tax Exemption Program

OFM's Diplomatic Tax Exemption Program exists to supervise and negotiate diplomatic tax exemption privileges here and abroad. Through the Program, OFM seeks complete tax exemption for U. S. missions and diplomatic personnel overseas, and grants tax exemption on a reciprocal basis to foreign missions and their diplomatic personnel in the United States. These tax exemption privileges are based on The Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to which the United States and most foreign nations are signatories. Ratified by the United States, these treaties are the law of the land under Article VI of the U.S. Constitution. As a result, all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico honor OFM's Diplomatic Tax Exemption Program.

OFM's Tax and Customs personnel engaged in negotiations with 35 foreign nations to improve tax relief for the U.S. government and its personnel in 2002, succeeding in 21 countries. The most dramatic improvement occurred in China, which dropped its minimum purchase requirement from the equivalent of 200 USD to the equivalent of 12 USD. Major improvements also took place in Malaysia, Kenya, Ecuador, Slovenia, Jordan, Azerbaijan and Honduras. Significant improvement took place in 13 other countries.

Diplomatic Customs Program

The Office of Foreign Missions processes incoming shipments and duty-free purchases for all foreign missions, coordinates customs policy and resolves customs problems. OFM Customs is a small unit that performs many roles in support of the orderly movement of diplomatic cargo and the improvement of

importation privileges granted to the staffs of U.S. missions abroad. In addition it provides guidance in reciprocal import privileges and fulfills a broad representative role in assisting the foreign mission community in the U.S.

OFM is experiencing an explosive growth in the number of Requests for Customs Clearances (DS Form 1504) it processes. Between the calendar years 2000 and 2003, the number of annual requests processed has more than doubled. This increase is largely attributed to efforts by the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to ensure that diplomatic cargo is cleared into the United States only through the joint program run by OFM and CBP. A secondary cause is an increase in duty free items bought by foreign diplomats from bonded warehouses. Such purchases are also cleared into the U. S. on 1504s.

In terms of the geographical distribution of processing, the Washington office of Tax and Customs processed 71% of all 1504s in 2002. New York processed 25%; Los Angeles processed 2%; Chicago and San Francisco each processed slightly less than 1%. As the Unit looks ahead, it envisions an increased application of technology to streamline the clearance processes and deal with increasing numbers of cases annually. ▢

DMV continued from page 1

To assist our U.S. mission abroad, OFM proposed a reciprocal action to downgrade the foreign embassy's trucks from a "diplomatic" status to that of a "staff" vehicle. This meant that staff plates would be issued for their trucks. By doing this, the trucks would have lost the functional advantages of status, including special access and parking, that are traditionally associated with "diplomatic" plates. Faced with the dilemma



The privilege of having a diplomatic license plate on your embassy's vehicles, even the trucks, makes a big difference in convenience and courtesies.

of losing these perquisites, the country decided to change its policy and issued diplomatic plates to the U.S. mission's trucks and buses.

This example illustrates how successfully employing reciprocity enabled the mission to continue carrying out its crucial tasks. When equitable resolutions are reached, it is important to note that both parties benefit and future goodwill is encouraged. ▢



OFM's Property Program

The community benefited through OFM's contribution of this property to the National Symphony Orchestra for restoration.

The OFM Property Program staff manages all facets of real estate affecting foreign missions in the U.S. In addition to reciprocity and security issues, the office is involved in such issues as zoning and land use, building permits, tax exemption and parking signs. The 275 real estate-related cases submitted by foreign missions in the past year varied from the routine request to approve a lease for a new staff apartment to resolving the zoning, land use, and tax issues surrounding the purchase of a new building for a chancery, or the renovation of an old one.

Yemen and Latvia went through the approval process to purchase new chanceries in the District of Columbia. After receiving permission to occupy the buildings, those countries joined Portugal, Qatar, PRC, Algeria, Estonia and Liberia in seeking OFM assistance in obtaining the building permits and other approvals necessary to renovate their properties. Algeria and Estonia were restoring chanceries that had suffered severe fire damage.

The renovation and expansion of the Ivory Coast's chancery on Embassy Row was also restarted with the Program providing extensive support and encouragement. Cote d'Ivoire's construction had been stalled by civil strife in that country, and delays had left a gaping ground hole that was unsightly and endangered Washington's Rock Creek Park below.

The Property Program's role as manager of diplomatic properties under the custody of the Department of State was under close scrutiny in 2002, as the unit took the lead in a major project to repair and return the Afghan Embassy to the new government.

Property management tasks vary—at the other end of the spectrum, these included the eviction of a tenant from a custodial property. The tenant, who had refused to pay rent for four years, finally left under court order, and the large mansion was given over to the National Symphony Orchestra which had the property restored and

redecorated for its annual decorator showhouse.

Property's role also reaches outside of the United States. It continues to be deeply involved in the Department's effort to complete a construction agreement with the People's Republic of China that would allow both countries to begin work on new chancery facilities. Members of the Property staff joined the negotiating team, headed by OFM's former DAS Strickler, in trips to Beijing and San Francisco.

A revised circular note was reissued to all missions regarding the policies and process for acquiring property in the United States. The lengthy note is reviewed and reissued every five years to educate the diplomatic and consular community on their legal obligations under the Foreign Missions Act. However, the most recent note made a significant policy change by stating that the Department would consider requests to locate diplomatic properties outside the geographic boundaries of the District of Columbia. The policy change came after a lengthy review with the National Capital Planning Commission of the many issues surrounding the location of chanceries in the District of Columbia. □



Construction under way for Cote d'Ivoire's embassy.

OFM Travel Program

The OFM Travel Program, co-existing alongside the Property Program, monitors travel controls established on foreign nationals for reciprocity or national security reasons. To expedite this goal, Travel has completed the design and development of a new database, as well as a new, comprehensive Standards of Procedure that include all the complex rules and regulations surrounding diplomatic travel. With these new tools, the



These days, airport screeners scan not only your carry-on, but all checked luggage as well for dangerous items.

Program will be able to more effectively monitor, as well as serve, the travel needs of foreign missions under its purview. A major focus for the year has been the initiation and implementation of the Diplomatic Screening Courtesies Program.

Enhanced security measures introduced at U.S. airports in the wake of September 11, 2001, led to a number of incidents that proved embarrassing to both high-ranking foreign visitors and the U.S. Government. In the fall of 2002, the Office of Foreign Missions was charged with collaborating with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in developing a program of airport screening courtesies for foreign officials of qualifying rank. Exploratory meetings included the Office of Protocol and representatives from the geographic bureaus.

In the initial agreement reached on the principal features of a program, TSA agreed to provide a full-time liaison position at OFM to help in the development and implementation of the program. That officer reported in February 2003.

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OFM's IT Program

The Office of Foreign Missions has experienced steady change in the technology arena. The OFM information system (TOMIS) has become a proven tool, fully supportive of the mission of OFM, and its recent enhancements have improved stability, adding both functionality and accuracy. This ability to view data with the variety of tools that the system provides has allowed management to take a fresh look at the OFM client community and permitted them to better tailor their programs to meet those needs.

The system also allows OFM to take advantage of technology to reduce costs and improve security in respect to document production.

OFM is moving forward on its E-government initiatives. To address the Government Paperwork Elimination Act of 2001, the IT unit has been working to Web-enable TOMIS. This project provides a framework for the electronic submission of requests for OFM services.

Using off-the-shelf Web technology, OFM is building a system that will allow the its client community to apply for all OFM services via the Internet. The goal is to reduce or eliminate the cumbersome paper-based process in use today by implementing Business to Client, and Business to Business, solutions for OFM, the foreign diplomatic community and OFM partners. The solution is expected to significantly reduce OFM contract labor and support costs, while improving the level of service OFM provides to its core clientele and partners.

As a proof of concept, OFM implemented an electronic data exchange program with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This program eliminated the need for the IMF to submit requests via paper for accreditation services. All requested services are handled electronically, thus reducing the need for manual intervention and processing while satisfying accreditation requirements. A similar program will be deployed to other international organizations including the



SGT Michael Kuchinsky of the Foreign Missions Branch (FMB), Uniformed Division, US Secret Service, is pictured receiving training in the use of TOMIS, OFM's information system. Instructing him is OFM's Clay Hays.

Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank in the coming months. This effort will significantly reduce the accreditation processing time.

Web-enabling TOMIS will also reduce the system's administrative burden, inherent with a broadly distributed client base. The modification also allows U.S. government departments or agencies to access TOMIS through widely available web browsers.

OFM presently receives data electronically on all A and G visa holders from the Bureau of Consular Affairs (CA). The data received is used to support OFM's Travel program and will be incorporated into the accreditation function of TOMIS. Plans are to also expand the interagency exchange effort to include the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS), expediting the capture of entry and exit information. Foreign diplomatic

personnel currently are required to provide photocopies of their passports, visas and entry and exit information to OFM in order to capture this information. The copies are filed along with the form submitted by the client requesting accreditation or status change. Access to BCIS data will provide an additional level of security by shifting our data collection directly to a Federal Government source, eliminating the manual data entry process, and improving accuracy of the data contained in the database.

OFM continues to build upon its technological successes and its strong information technology foundation. Investing aggressively in information technology is beginning to realize savings in both time and money while allowing the roll out of services that will benefit not only OFM, but also our core constituencies and the Department. □

Travel from page 3

After hammering out procedural details, the essential elements were in place by late May. In coordinated actions the first week of June, OFM issued a circular diplomatic note describing the program, and TSA sent a directive governing its implementation to the Federal Security Directors at the nation's airports. On June 10 the first requests were processed.

There have been very few problems or complaints in the program's first months, during

which time hundreds of courtesy screenings have taken place. The program has had consistently favorable feedback. Variation in the application of the courtesies is occasionally necessary from one airport to another due to a number of factors, among them differences in the physical configuration of airports. However, the experience of a

dignitary approved for screening courtesies at a given airport should be virtually identical each time.

Both OFM and TSA see the program as a dynamic one that will evolve as the lessons learned during its early stages are translated into practical adaptations and procedural refinements. □

Reports From the Regions

OFM regional directors and their staffs across the country make up a network implementing U.S. policies affecting foreign diplomatic and consular personnel.

Because these privileges and immunities are unknown to the majority of the general public, the regional offices often serve as intermediaries between foreign diplomatic and consular officers and the American public in upholding U.S. commitments under treaties, conventions and international custom. They also implement programs to ensure that foreign diplomatic and consular personnel do not abuse their special status.

... the Chicago Regional Office

Responsibility for the largest geographical territory in the department falls to the Chicago Regional Office of Foreign Missions (also known as the Central Region).

This office aggressively pursues a program of improvement in its OFM service and outreach efforts for their 14-state area. For example, piloting a program to decentralize document production, the Chicago office began local production of driver licenses and tax cards. They now deliver such cards to mission members in 2-3 days on average, significantly reducing the previous 2-week processing time. The program is now being expanded to other regions, and plans are being drafted to extend Chicago's capabilities to directly process other regional applications currently processed by OFM Washington.

Cooperation is another component of the office's mission. The strong alliance between the Chicago OFM Regional Office, the Illinois Secretary of State, and Department of Revenue continues. Both agencies published new industry information regarding specific tax exemptions available to foreign mission personnel. The Department of Revenue, working closely with the Regional Office, rewrote a publication of information and instruction targeted to the hotel and lodging industry regarding diplomatic tax exemptions. The Secretary of State's office produced a detailed bulletin, distributed to more than 13,000 auto dealers and registration remitters statewide, describing the U.S. Department of State's diplomatic motor vehicle program and how to work with members of foreign missions looking to purchase vehicles.

The office held five seminars for foreign mission members in the past year. Two of these were designed to brief Consuls General on consular notification and protocol issues. Representatives from Chicago's mayor's office and the Illinois Governor's office spoke, as did members of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, and Office of Protocol. Three seminars were presented introducing consular administrative staff to OFM programs and application procedures.

Real estate purchases and renovations proved to be the most labor-intensive OFM undertakings in 2002 for the Chicago Regional Office. Several missions in the central region underwent major renovations requiring assistance on matters of code

Regional directors maintain day-to-day contact with the consulates general, consulates and honorary consuls in their areas, acting most often as service providers. They and their staffs administer local tax exemption programs, customs clearances, motor vehicle programs, real estate programs and travel programs. They are increasingly turning their attention to outreach, providing information to diplomatic and consular personnel and those parts of the American public with which the diplomatic community most often interacts.



Chicago Regional Director Denise Duclon greets Cmdr. Dougherty at a law enforcement seminar.

and regulations compliance, contractor interface, and reciprocity-based issues. Close work with the Embassy of Serbia and Montenegro resulted in the official opening of their Chicago Consulate General in 2002. Also, discussions between OFM and members of the Russian Embassy laid the groundwork for the opening of a Russian Consulate in Houston in 2003.

OFM's message of involvement and cooperation was reinforced through Regional Director Duclon's briefings to law enforcement personnel in Michigan and Illinois. Such briefings, in conjunction with those of our partners in the Offices of Diplomatic Security, Protocol and Consular Affairs, help to educate law enforcement agencies on the proper handling of any incident involving a foreign mission member. The recognized importance of OFM as a team member in the war on terrorism prompted the U.S. Attorney's Terrorism Task Force in Chicago to invite Regional Director Duclon to join the group.

The year ended with an intensive inspection of OFM by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) that resulted in the Chicago Regional Office receiving special recognition. □

... the New York Regional Office

Vehicle parking in many of the major cities around the world often offers a challenge to the performance of everyday tasks for diplomats posted abroad. In heavily populated New York City, home to 190 UN Missions and 105 Consulates, parking spaces have always been highly sought after, but difficult to secure, leading to a strain on local relationships as well as disruption of business. However, that difficulty has eased in recent months, thanks to the efforts of OFM, and the U.S. State Department, negotiating on behalf of the foreign diplomatic and consular community in Manhattan, and the City of New York.

The entities succeeded in crafting a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in August 2002. The new parking MOU for the first time provides UN Missions and Consulates with dedicated, reserved, 24/7 parking in close proximity to their offices, thereby facilitating the conduct of official business. It also provides a significant number of shared parking spaces throughout Manhattan exclusively for diplomatic delivery vehicles. Unauthorized persons who park in diplomatic/consular spaces now do so at their own risk, as the MOU encourages diplomats to report offenders to a dedicated NYC Police Traffic Management Hot Line. The City will promptly dispatch an officer from the nearest precinct to ticket non-diplomatic cars occupying



New signage is sprouting in NYC as a result of a diplomatic MOU facilitated by OFM NY.

diplomatic spaces, and/or dispatch the first available tow truck as necessary.

With the New York Regional Office spearheading the effort, OFM has continued to track the agreement by working closely with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN) and appropriate City authorities. OFM briefed the New York City consular corps on the parking MOU, and assisted USUN at a similar briefing for the diplomatic corps. OFM distributed information materials to give foreign diplomats a clearer understanding of New York City parking laws, and to remind them of their own obligation to respect local traffic regulations. The cooperative effort also ensured that new parking decals for designated consular and diplomatic service/delivery vehicles were distributed, and that reserved parking spaces for the UN Missions and Consulates, with proper signage, were in place by the November 1 program start date.

The win-win MOU has helped reduce congestion on busy City streets, and has led to a dramatic reduction in the number of traffic summonses issued to local diplomatic and consular personnel. In addition, OFM has assisted the City in settling more than one million dollars of past consular parking fines, and, together with USUN, is working with UN Missions to address their unresolved parking summonses.

OFM has continued to work with the consular corps and the City to assist in identifying foreign nationals that were victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack. OFM/NY has served as a conduit of information between the foreign community, the City and federal government authorities on a variety of issues, including obtaining information for death certificates and victim compensation. The office also hosted a meeting of the New York City Domestic Terrorism Squad to review information exchange and procedural protocol in the event of future incidents involving diplomatic and consular properties. □

... The San Francisco Office

Beyond providing services to the diplomatic and consular communities throughout the northwest, San Francisco's Office of Foreign Missions, under the management of Regional Director Leroy Dal Porto, engages in outreach activities that serve a number of important State Department goals.

In particular, the San Francisco office focuses on the Secretary of State's Diplomatic Readiness Initiatives through the sponsorship of an on-going educational program targeted at law enforcement and licensing agencies in California, Washington and Oregon. This program focuses on both the requirements and the limits of diplomatic immunity, thereby not only helping to assure the interests and security of American citizens here at home, but also those of American citizens abroad through reciprocal treatment by foreign governments.

OFM's San Francisco staff provides practical support while encouraging enforcement and



OFM Director, Ambassador Francis Taylor (third from left), reviewed the accomplishments of the San Francisco Regional office as he visited with the Director and staff in August.

licensing agencies in the region to include the subject of diplomatic immunity in roll-call training, and in basic and supervisory training curriculums. The premise of this approach is that a working understanding of U.S. treaty commitments on the part of the local enforcement agencies makes it less likely that foreign diplomats who do violate U.S. law will be able to escape the consequences through a false claim of privileges or immunity.

Concurrently, OFM/SF's enforcement outreach focuses on assisting the Bureau of Consular Affairs in sensitizing local agencies to the legal requirements of the Vienna Convention for Consular Relations (VCCR) for consular notification and access in the event of a foreign national's arrest. Increased law enforcement familiarity with notification and access requirements both protects Americans abroad, through reciprocity, and enhances the record of the U.S. regarding compliance with international law.

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... the Los Angeles Regional Office

In an unusual circumstance, the Office of Foreign Missions, Los Angeles, has had a severe staffing shortage since May 2002. Concerned about providing quality service to their consular community, Regional Director David van Valkenburg and Deputy Director Jeff Seely searched for a solution while themselves becoming more directly involved with routine duties. A solution proved near at hand—across the street on the campus of the University of California, Los Angeles. For the past year, UCLA students working part-time under supervision of the Director, have successfully provided most of the administrative services for the 1,200-member consular community in Los Angeles and 250 more members elsewhere in the southwest. UCLA undergraduates have brought real energy and creativity to the LA customer services program, so much so that OFM has made the program permanent through a long-term relationship with UCLA.

OFM Los Angeles has always utilized an active outreach program. The staff addresses retail associations, trade shows and citizen groups to promote an understanding of how OFM and the Department of State serve Americans at home and abroad. Both the regional and deputy director actively seek opportunities to speak to students and job applicants. They concentrate on schools not scheduled for visits by Department of State recruiters in an effort to expand the pool of applicants and to increase awareness of opportunities within the Department to a broader audience. Special outreach efforts to law enforcement agencies are undertaken by OFM Los Angeles in an effort to promote an understanding of the U.S. treaty obligations to provide consular notification and access.

Recognizing that Mexico has, by far, the largest consular presence in the southwest with consulates in 15 cities in southern California, southern Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and Utah, OFM has extended its program through a new approach. OFM's office in Los Angeles now works with Mexican consular representatives to reach



Deputy Regional Director Jeff Seely shares a podium with Los Angeles Mayor James K. Hahn at an outdoor press conference.



Regional Director David van Valkenburg (center) takes part in a Career Day panel at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

those law enforcement agencies that have the most contact with Mexicans and, presumably, other foreign citizens in the United States. OFM provides the speaker, video presentations and reference publications. Mexican consulates provide the venue and invite the audience of local law enforcement officials. With eleven years of consular experience overseas, seven of them in Mexico, Director van Valkenburg can credibly impress the audience with the understanding that Mexican and other consular officers here are providing the same services to their citizens in the U.S. as American officers do in Mexico and other foreign countries. The United States relies on official cooperation abroad just as foreign consular officers do here.

The approach has proved successful. The head of one consular post contacted OFM with some alarm. He was learning of double, triple, the number of arrests in his locality as in previous years. His fear was that local law enforcement agencies were taking a hard line against all foreigners in the post-September 11 environment. The reality proved to be that the number of arrests involving his co-nationals was about the same previously. It was compliance with consular notification requirements that was soaring. □

San Francisco, from page 6

Community outreach efforts include participating in the recruitment of highly qualified and diverse applicants for careers with the Department of State. Throughout the year, OFM's San Francisco office participates in career fairs and information sessions at universities throughout northern California and Oregon. Moreover, the Deputy Regional Director accepts numerous invitations to speak at schools and in front of youth organizations discussing topics of foreign policy, international relations, and American diplomatic history, as well as the possibility of future careers in the Department. By highlighting the important and exciting work the State Department team performs to young people, OFM San Francisco is doing its part to assure that the future of U.S. diplomacy rests in the hands of motivated, talented and diverse professionals. □

... the Miami Regional Office

First opened in a temporary Ft. Lauderdale office in late 2001, OFM's newest regional office now operates from a permanent home in a Mediterranean-style Coral Gables office building in metropolitan Miami, able to offer a range of services.

Once new consular personnel in the Southeast United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico are 'notified' to the Department of State by their Washington embassies, they are now able to apply for almost all OFM services by directly contacting the new Miami Regional Office. Those services include driver licenses, vehicle registrations and tax exemption cards. Though the office currently must forward requests for customs clearances (form DS-1504) to OFM Washington headquarters for approval, plans are in place for these clearances also to be processed and locally approved. OFM Miami is working to begin this new service in spring, 2004.

Regional Director Terry Daru has made staff training a top priority for his staff. Deputy Director Carolyn Parker recently joined colleagues from OFM regional offices nationwide for two weeks of intensive instruction in Washington, D.C. They focused in better adapting the systems and processes with which OFM serves its consular clients. Newly hired Program Specialist Kelsey Vaughan consults daily with OFM's Washington office; and all staff members are in frequent communication with their counterparts both in the regional offices and in headquarters with regard to the effective delivery of OFM's unique business—service and support to the foreign official community.

Armed with newly acquired information and expertise—and ready to expand its reach throughout the region—OFM



Swiss Consul General and Dean of the Atlanta Consular Corps Alex Kubli (left) receives a farewell gift from Office of Foreign Missions Miami Regional Director Terry Daru.

Miami will soon embark on a series of roadtrip training seminars for personnel assigned to career consulates in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and Puerto Rico. Individualized training in OFM regulations and procedures will be given to at least two representatives from each consulate in the region by spring, 2004. The result should be better, faster service to the foreign consular community. □

Student Outreach Programs



The Office of Foreign Missions and the U.S. Department of State have in place several special opportunities for students from high school to graduate level. These include the Cooperative Education, Stay-in-School, Student Internship and Summer Clerical programs.

These Programs enable students to obtain job experience in a foreign affairs environment. Some work in Washington, D.C., while others have the opportunity to work in regional offices or at U.S. embassies and consulates abroad.

Cooperative Education Program

What is the Cooperative Education Program? It's when you, your school, and the Department and OFM get together for the good of your career. It's classroom studies and on-the-job training. It's how you can serve your nation while receiving the experience you need for the job of your choice.

Stay-in-School Program

Part of you wants to stay in school, and part of you wants to work. You can do both—it's the perfect work-study combina-

tion. For starters, you'll work part-time when school is in session and full-time during vacation periods. Many opportunities are in office or administrative support fields. You'll be paid at regular Government salary rates, dependent on your assigned duties.

Student Internships

Here's an opportunity for you to get an inside look at the different types of positions and responsibilities available in foreign affairs. Think of it as taking a career test ride. Sixty or more semester hours, or 90-quarter hours, must be completed by the time the internship begins.

Summer Clerical Program

Applicants for the Summer Clerical Program are appointed on a competitive basis according to Office of Personnel Management guidelines. Selections are based on job-related criteria in line with merit principles.

Each of these programs has advantages and requirements described in detail at www.careers.state.gov/students. (Programs on this site are for students who are U.S. citizens. Non-U.S. citizens may apply for similar programs through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), at <http://exchanges.state.gov>.) □